

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1 - 31.

Please add the following new Claims 32 - 43:

--32. An information recording medium comprising:

a substrate;

a recording layer for recording information in a form of a recording mark based on atomic arrangement change and/or electric state change caused by irradiation of an energy beam;

a reflective layer for reflecting the energy beam;

a first protective layer disposed between the substrate and the recording layer;

a second protective layer disposed between the recording layer and the reflective layer;

a third protective layer that has a composition different from the first protective layer disposed between the first protective layer and the recording layer;

a fourth protective layer that has a composition different from the second protective layer disposed between the recording layer and the second protective layer .

33. An information recording medium according to claim 32, wherein the third protective layer is made of any of an oxide, a nitride and a fluoride.

34. An information recording medium according to claim 32. wherein a thickness of the third protective layer is not

less than 2nm and not more than 20nm.

35. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein a thickness of the third protective layer is not  
less than 4nm and not more than 8nm.

36. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein the fourth protective layer is made of any of an  
oxide, a nitride and a fluoride.

37. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein a thickness of the fourth protective layer is not  
less than 2nm and not more than 20nm.

38. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein a thickness of the fourth protective layer is  
not less than 4nm and not more than 8nm.

39. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein the third protective layer prevents mutual  
diffusion of a material of the first protective layer and a  
material of the recording layer.

40. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein the fourth protective layer prevents mutual  
diffusion of a material of the second protective layer and a

material of the recording layer.

41. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein the reflective layer has a first reflective layer  
and a second reflective layer.

42. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein the first protective layer made of any of an  
oxide, a sulfide or a nitride, and a refractive index of the  
first protective layer is 1.5 or more.

43. An information recording medium according to claim 32,  
wherein the second protective layer made of any of an  
oxide, a sulfide or a nitride, and a refractive index of the  
first protective layer is 1.5 or more.--